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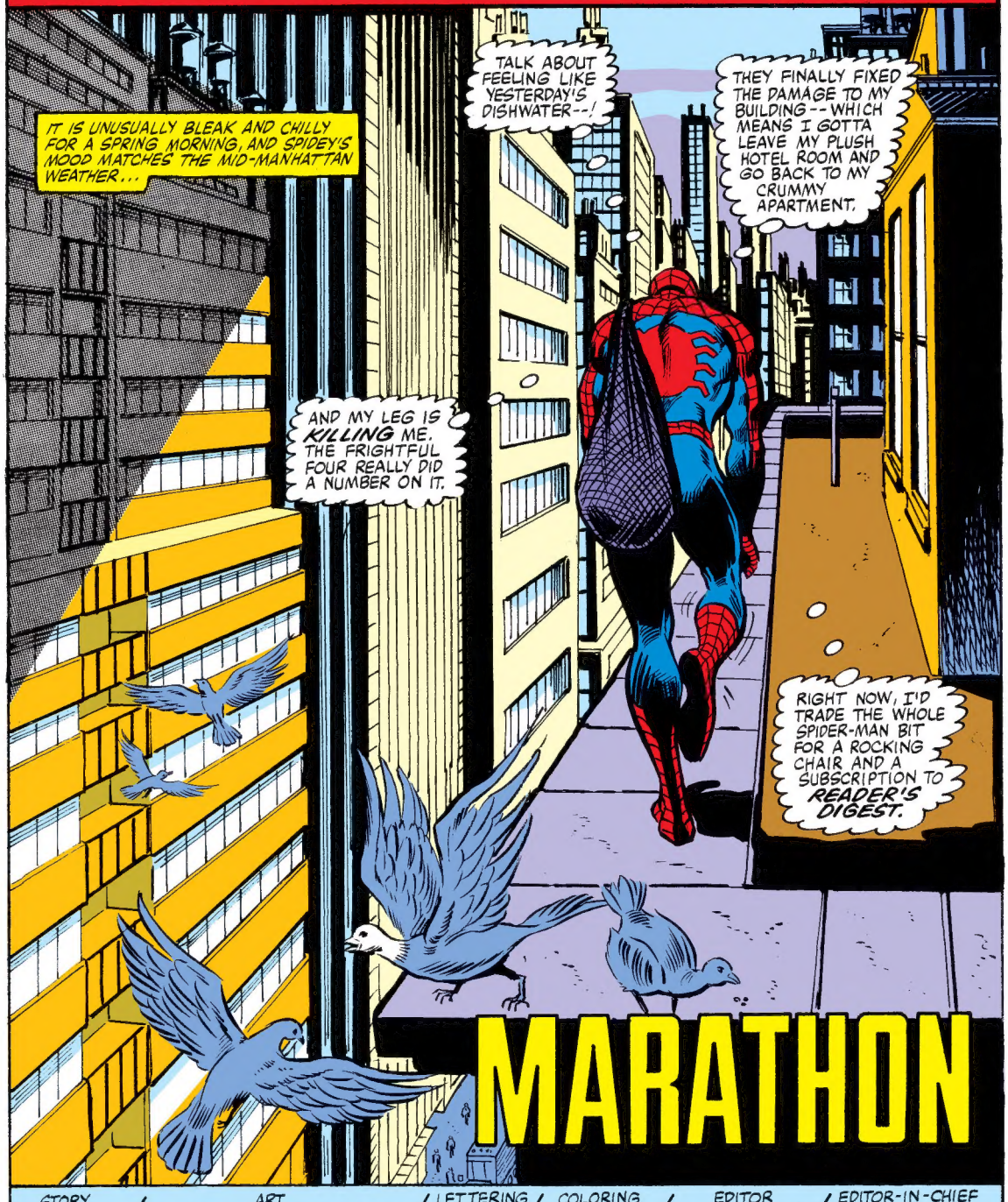
the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN®
TM
THE RACE IS ON...
WILL DEATH BE THE VICTOR?
AND DON'T MISS: THE RETURN OF MADAME WEB!

While attending a demonstration in radiology, student PETER PARKER was bitten by a spider which had accidentally been exposed to RADIOACTIVE RAYS. Through a miracle of science, Peter soon found that he had GAINED the arachnid's powers...and had, in effect, become a human spider...

Stan Lee PRESENTS: THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN®



MARATHON

STORY DENNY O'NEIL / ART JOHN ROMITA, JR. & JIM MOONEY / LETTERING JIM NOVAK / COLORING BOB SHAREN / EDITOR ALLEN MILGROM / EDITOR-IN-CHIEF JIM SHOOTER

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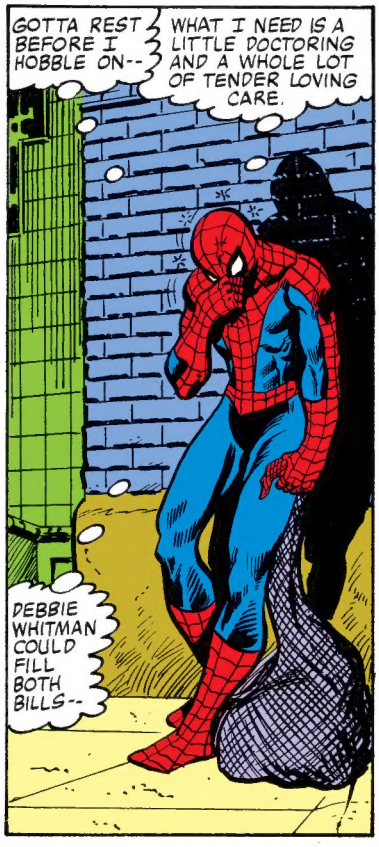
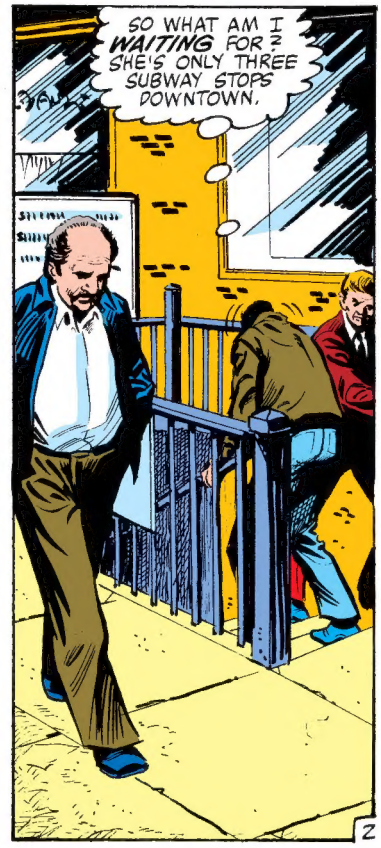

GOTTA REST BEFORE I HOBBLE ON--
WHAT I NEED IS A LITTLE DOCTORING AND A WHOLE LOT OF TENDER LOVING CARE.
DEBBIE WHITMAN COULD FILL BOTH BILLS--

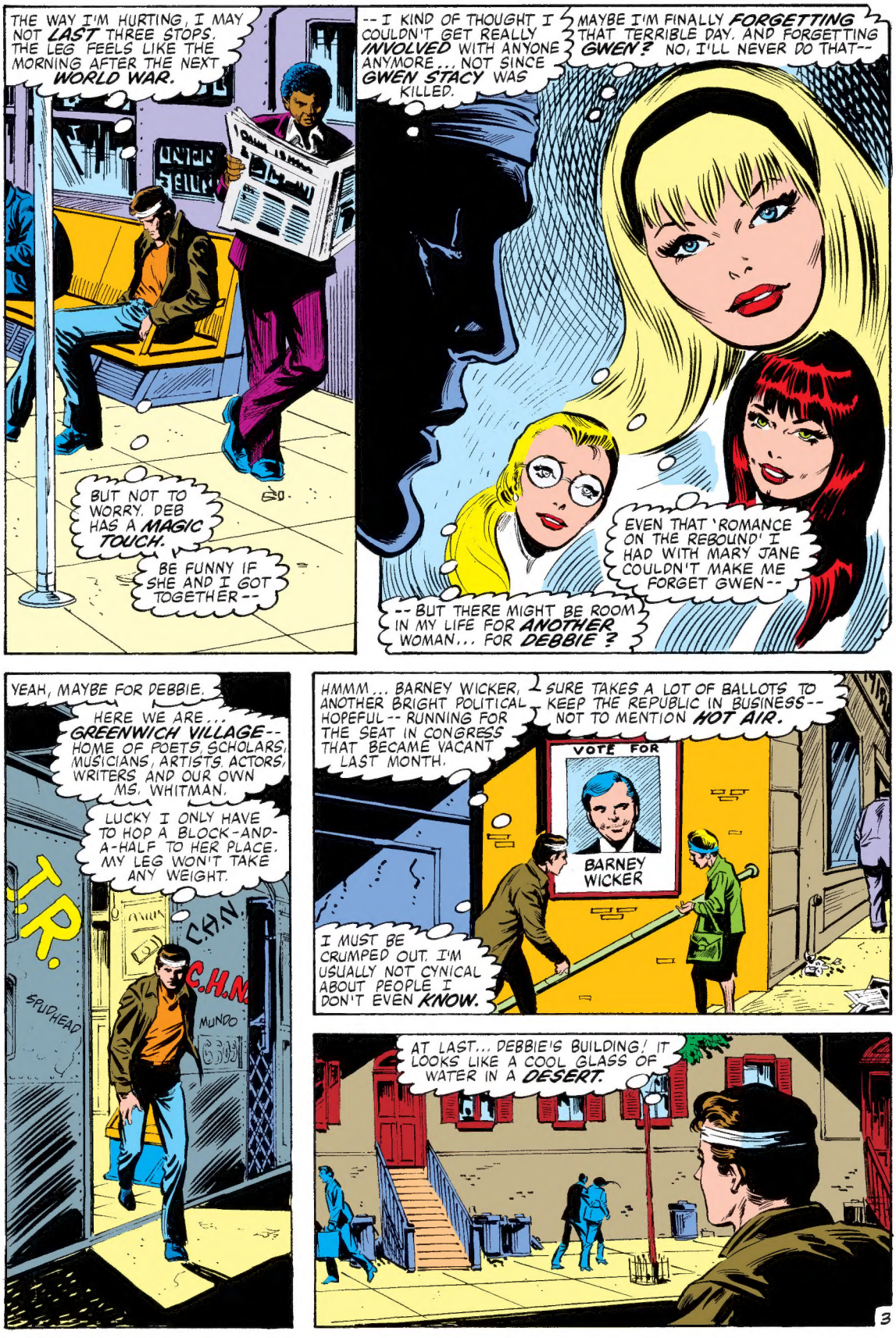
--BUT SHE DIDN'T ANSWER HER PHONE WHEN I CALLED EARLIER.
PROBABLY VISITING HER UNCLE.
SHE'LL BE HOME BY NOW.

'COURSE, SHE WOULDN'T EXACTLY WELCOME SPIDER-MAN -- ESPECIALLY A SPIDEY WHOSE COSTUME LOOKS LIKE SOMETHING A RAGMAN WOULD REFUSE--

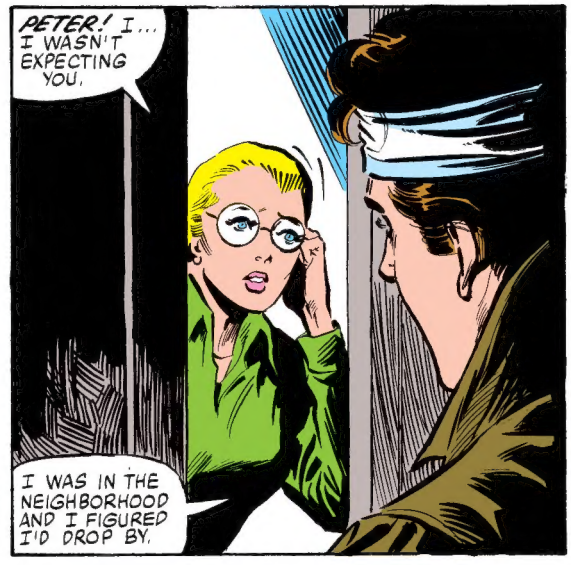
--BUT SHE HAS A WARM REGARD FOR OL' PETER PARKER.
IN FACT, IT'S BEGINNING TO BE A VERY, VERY WARM REGARD--

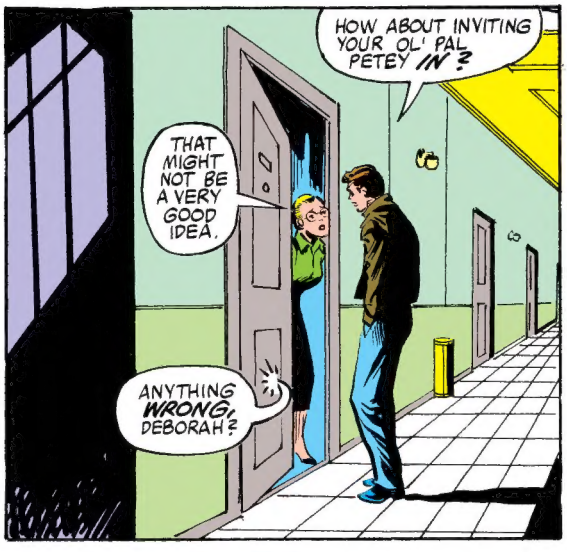
--AND WHAT'S MORE, I'VE BEGUN TO SEE HER IN A NEW LIGHT, TOO.
BENEATH HER SHYNESS IS A REALLY PRETTY LADY.


SO WHAT AM I WAITING FOR? SHE'S ONLY THREE SUBWAY STOPS DOWNTOWN.


THE WAY I'M HURTING, I MAY NOT LAST THREE STOPS. THE LEG FEELS LIKE THE MORNING AFTER THE NEXT WORLD WAR.
BUT NOT TO WORRY. DEB HAS A MAGIC TOUCH.
BE FUNNY IF SHE AND I GOT TOGETHER--
-- I KIND OF THOUGHT I COULDN'T GET REALLY INVOLVED WITH ANYONE ANYMORE... NOT SINCE GWEN STACY WAS KILLED.
MAYBE I'M FINALLY FORGETTING THAT TERRIBLE DAY. AND FORGETTING GWEN? NO, I'LL NEVER DO THAT--
EVEN THAT 'ROMANCE ON THE REBOUND' I HAD WITH MARY JANE COULDN'T MAKE ME FORGET GWEN--
-- BUT THERE MIGHT BE ROOM IN MY LIFE FOR ANOTHER WOMAN... FOR DEBBIE?
YEAH, MAYBE FOR DEBBIE.
HERE WE ARE... GREENWICH VILLAGE-- HOME OF POETS, SCHOLARS, MUSICIANS, ARTISTS, ACTORS, WRITERS AND OUR OWN MS. WHITMAN.
LUCKY I ONLY HAVE TO HOP A BLOCK-AND-A-HALF TO HER PLACE. MY LEG WON'T TAKE ANY WEIGHT.
T.R.
SPUDHEAD
C.H.N.
C.H.N.
MUNDO
HMMM... BARNEY WICKER, ANOTHER BRIGHT POLITICAL HOPEFUL -- RUNNING FOR THE SEAT IN CONGRESS THAT BECAME VACANT LAST MONTH.
SURE TAKES A LOT OF BALLOTS TO KEEP THE REPUBLIC IN BUSINESS-- NOT TO MENTION HOT AIR.
VOTE FOR
BARNEY WICKER
I MUST BE CRUMPED OUT. I'M USUALLY NOT CYNICAL ABOUT PEOPLE I DON'T EVEN KNOW.
AT LAST... DEBBIE'S BUILDING! IT LOOKS LIKE A COOL GLASS OF WATER IN A DESERT.

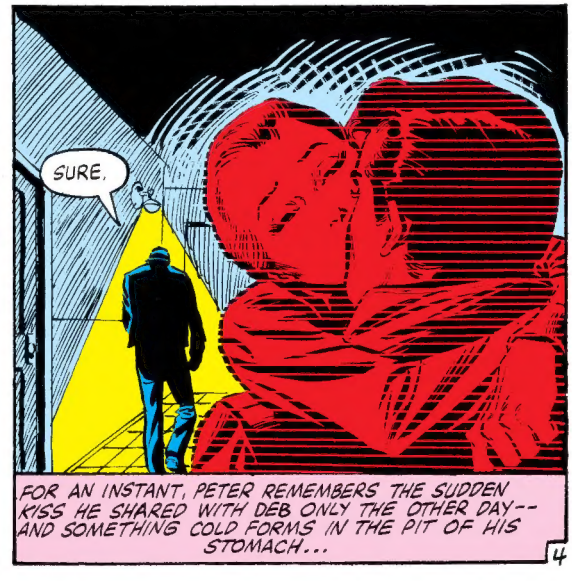
HALLELUJAH! I CAN HEAR HER MOVING AROUND INSIDE!
DEB! OPEN UP! IT'S ME!
D. WHITMAN III
NOK
NOK


PETER! I... I WASN'T EXPECTING YOU.
I WAS IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD AND I FIGURED I'D DROP BY.


HOW ABOUT INVITING YOUR OL' PAL PETEY IN?
THAT MIGHT NOT BE A VERY GOOD IDEA.
ANYTHING WRONG, DEBORAH?

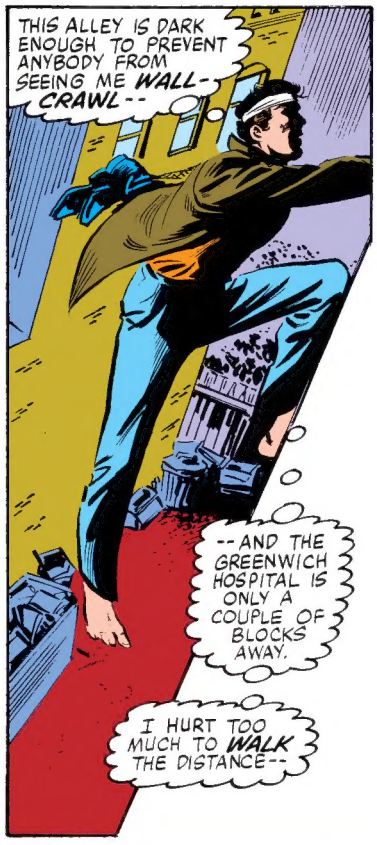
PETER, THIS IS BIFF RIFKIN... FROM MY HOME TOWN...
HI, GUY! DO ANY LITTLE THING FOR YOU?

UH... NO. I'M... JUST PASSING THROUGH. SORRY I DISTURBED YOU.
'BYE.
HASTA LA VISTA, CHUMSO! DON'T TAKE ANY WOODEN SUBWAY TOKENS.
I'LL BE SEEING YOU, PETER.


SURE.
FOR AN INSTANT, PETER REMEMBERS THE SUDDEN KISS HE SHARED WITH DEB ONLY THE OTHER DAY-- AND SOMETHING COLD FORMS IN THE PIT OF HIS STOMACH...

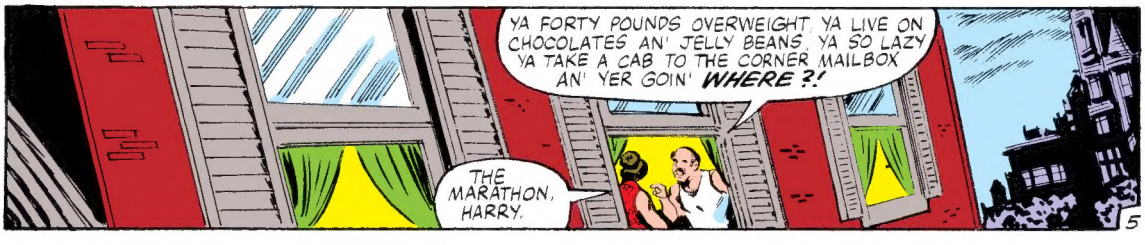
BOY O' BOY.
ALL I WANNA DO IS JUMP INTO A HOLE--
--AND PULL IT IN AFTER ME.
I CAN'T BLAME DEBBIE--

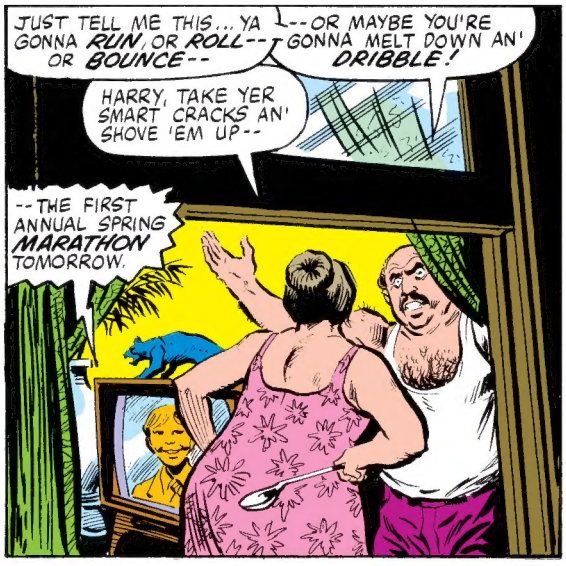
--I GUESS SHE JUST GOT TIRED OF WAITING.
I'LL JUST HAVE TO TEND TO MY BUM LEG MYSELF.

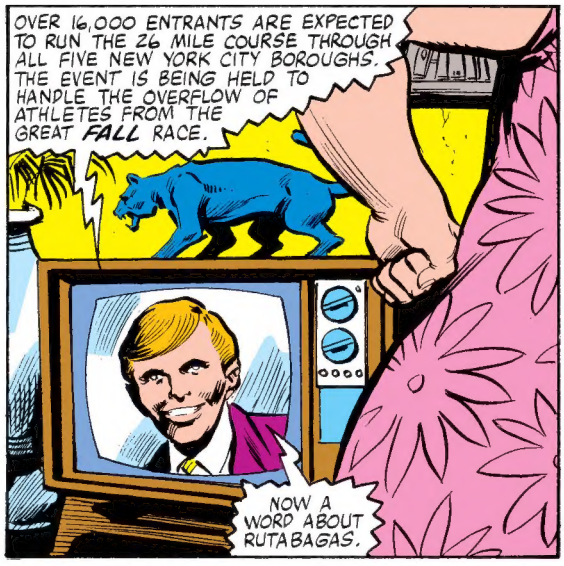

THIS ALLEY IS DARK ENOUGH TO PREVENT ANYBODY FROM SEEING ME WALL-CRAWL--
--AND THE GREENWICH HOSPITAL IS ONLY A COUPLE OF BLOCKS AWAY.
I HURT TOO MUCH TO WALK THE DISTANCE--

--BUT I CAN WEB IT WITH NO SWEAT.
YA SIGNED UP FOR WHAT?!
THE MARATHON, HARRY.

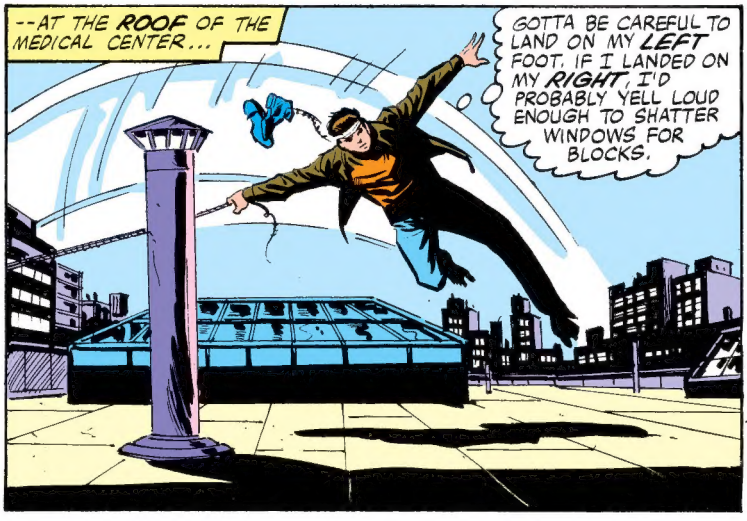
MY FELLOW CITY DWELLERS... THEY'RE ALWAYS FINDING NEW THINGS TO ARGUE ABOUT.
YA SPENT THIRTY BUCKS ONNA NEW PAIR'A SHOES FOR WHAT?!
THE MARATHON, HARRY.

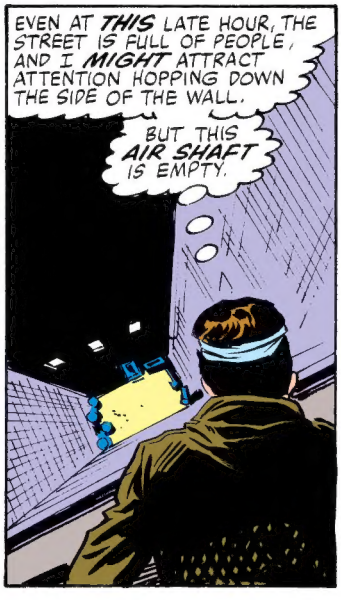

YA FORTY POUNDS OVERWEIGHT. YA LIVE ON CHOCOLATES AN' JELLY BEANS. YA SO LAZY YA TAKE A CAB TO THE CORNER MAILBOX AN' YER GOIN' WHERE?!
THE MARATHON, HARRY.


JUST TELL ME THIS... YA GONNA RUN, OR ROLL-- OR BOUNCE--
--OR MAYBE YOU'RE GONNA MELT DOWN AN' DRIBBLE!
HARRY, TAKE YER SMART CRACKS AN' SHOVE 'EM UP--
--THE FIRST ANNUAL SPRING MARATHON TOMORROW.

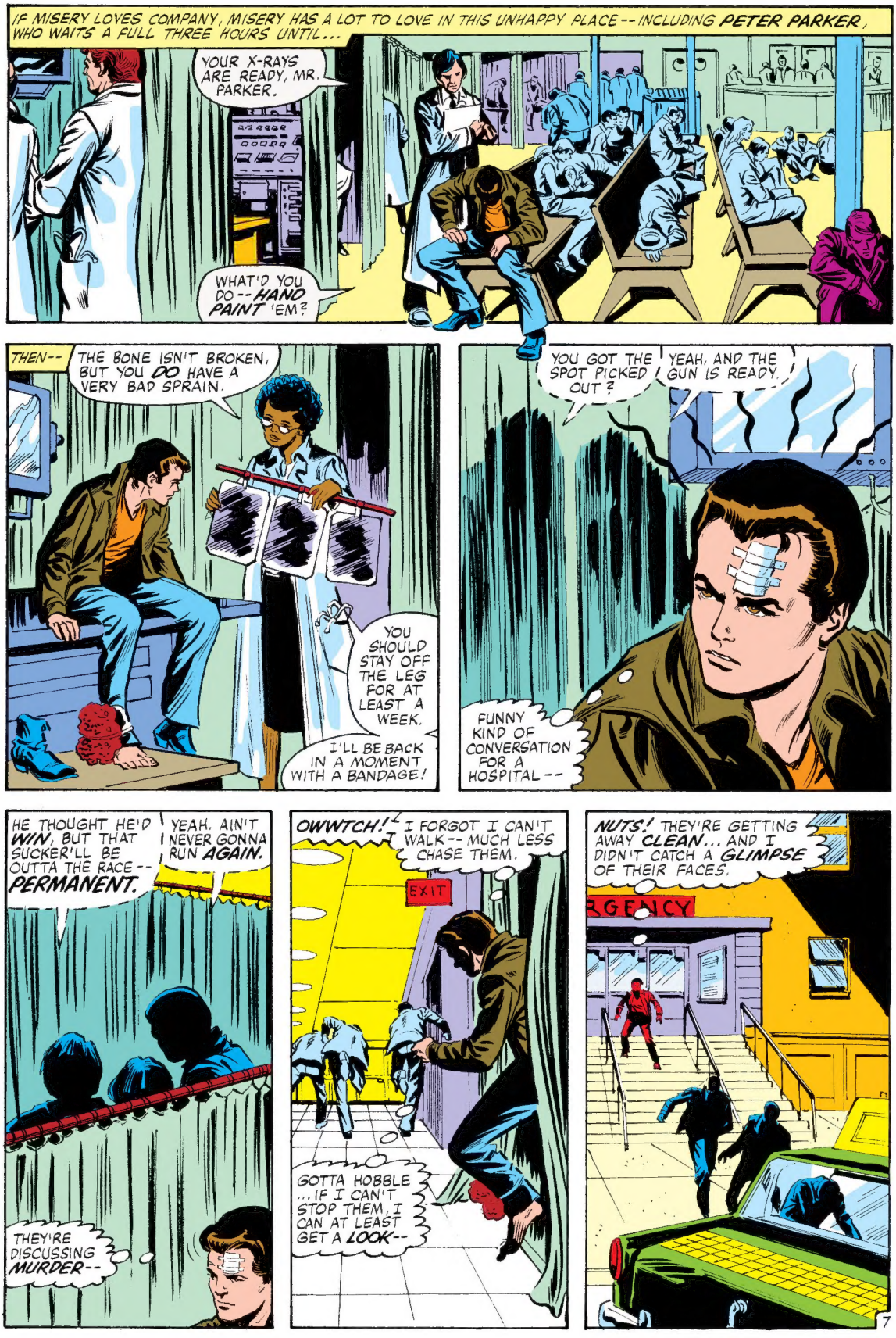

OVER 16,000 ENTRANTS ARE EXPECTED TO RUN THE 26 MILE COURSE THROUGH ALL FIVE NEW YORK CITY BOROUGHS. THE EVENT IS BEING HELD TO HANDLE THE OVERFLOW OF ATHLETES FROM THE GREAT FALL RACE.
NOW A WORD ABOUT RUTABAGAS.

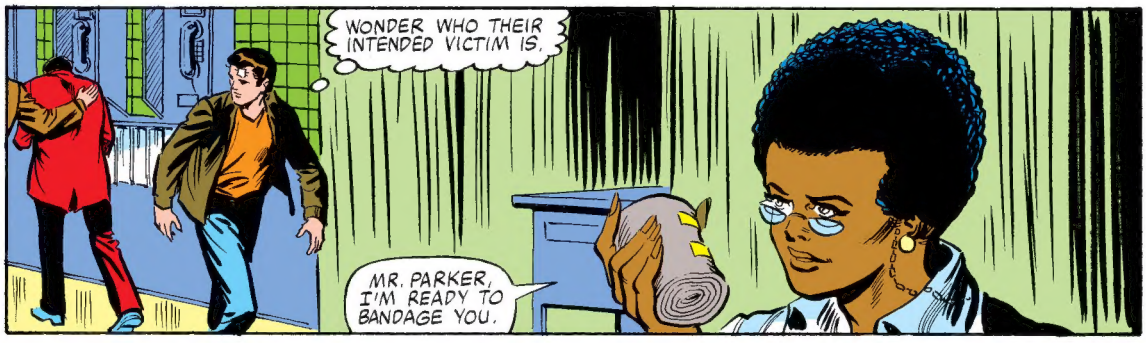
PETER PARKER, HOWEVER, NEVER HEARS THAT EXCITING WORD, FOR HE HAS ARRIVED AT A MEDICAL CENTER NESTLED IN THE HEART OF GREENWICH VILLAGE -- OR, TO BE EXACT--


--AT THE ROOF OF THE MEDICAL CENTER...
GOTTA BE CAREFUL TO LAND ON MY LEFT FOOT. IF I LANDED ON MY RIGHT, I'D PROBABLY YELL LOUD ENOUGH TO SHATTER WINDOWS FOR BLOCKS.


EVEN AT THIS LATE HOUR, THE STREET IS FULL OF PEOPLE, AND I MIGHT ATTRACT ATTENTION HOPPING DOWN THE SIDE OF THE WALL.
BUT THIS AIR SHAFT IS EMPTY.

I'LL HAVE TO HOPE NOBODY GLANCES OUT A WINDOW.
EMERGENCY WARD, HERE I COME!

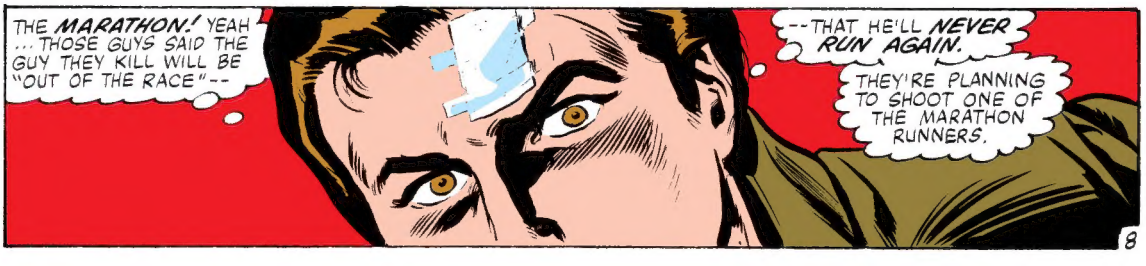

IF MISERY LOVES COMPANY, MISERY HAS A LOT TO LOVE IN THIS UNHAPPY PLACE -- INCLUDING PETER PARKER, WHO WAITS A FULL THREE HOURS UNTIL...
YOUR X-RAYS ARE READY, MR. PARKER.
WHAT'D YOU DO -- HAND PAINT 'EM?
THEN --
THE BONE ISN'T BROKEN, BUT YOU DO HAVE A VERY BAD SPRAIN.
YOU SHOULD STAY OFF THE LEG FOR AT LEAST A WEEK.
I'LL BE BACK IN A MOMENT WITH A BANDAGE!
YOU GOT THE SPOT PICKED OUT?
YEAH, AND THE GUN IS READY.
FUNNY KIND OF CONVERSATION FOR A HOSPITAL --
HE THOUGHT HE'D WIN, BUT THAT SUCKER'LL BE OUTTA THE RACE -- PERMANENT.
YEAH. AIN'T NEVER GONNA RUN AGAIN.
THEY'RE DISCUSSING MURDER --
OWWTCH!
I FORGOT I CAN'T WALK -- MUCH LESS CHASE THEM.
EXIT
GOTTA HOBBLE ... IF I CAN'T STOP THEM, I CAN AT LEAST GET A LOOK --
NUTS! THEY'RE GETTING AWAY CLEAN... AND I DIDN'T CATCH A GLIMPSE OF THEIR FACES.
RGENCY


WONDER WHO THEIR INTENDED VICTIM IS.
MR. PARKER, I'M READY TO BANDAGE YOU.

THERE. THAT DOESN'T HURT, DOES IT ?
NONE AT ALL. THEY COULD'VE BEEN ANYONE.
NOT A -- GNNNH! -- BIT.
HEY, DOCTOR, YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHO THE GUYS IN THE NEXT CUBICLE WERE ?

OH, DEAR. ANOTHER RUNNING INJURY. EXCUSE ME.
SURE.
913
330

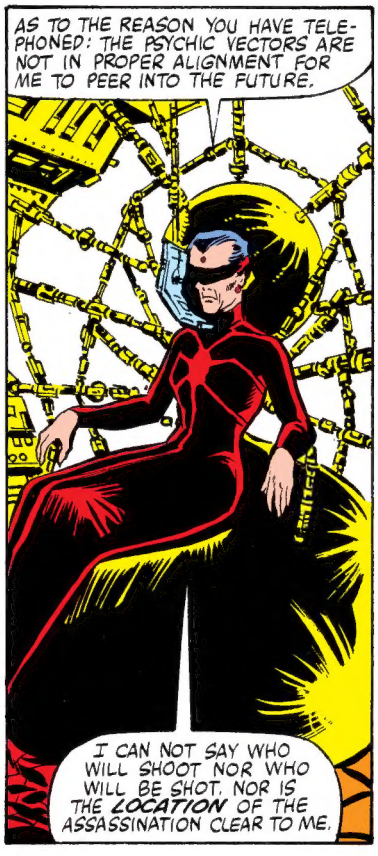
HOW DID IT HAPPEN?
I WAS -- HEE HEE -- TRAINING FOR -- HEE HEE -- THE MARATHON AND -- HEE HEE...
CUT IT OUT, DOC. YOU'RE TICKLING ME.


THE MARATHON! YEAH ... THOSE GUYS SAID THE GUY THEY KILL WILL BE "OUT OF THE RACE" --
-- THAT HE'LL NEVER RUN AGAIN.
THEY'RE PLANNING TO SHOOT ONE OF THE MARATHON RUNNERS.

BUT WHICH ONE? THE TV GUY SAID THERE ARE 16,000 ENTRANTS.
THAT'S A LOT OF POSSIBILITIES--

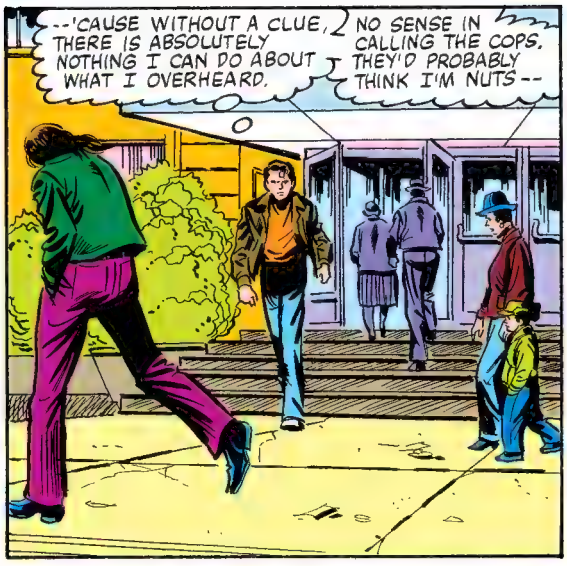
--STRETCHED OVER 26 MILES OF STREETS. THERE MUST BE A MILLION PLACES FOR A SNIPER TO SHOOT FROM.
IT'D TAKE A MIRACLE WORKER TO TELL WHERE THE KILLER WILL BE HIDING--AND WHO'LL BE ON THE RECEIVING END OF THE BULLET.
FORTUNATELY, I HAPPEN TO KNOW A MIRACLE-WORKER--

--MADAM WEB, THE CLAIRVOYANT WHO HELPED ME PUT THE SKIDS UNDER RUPERT DOCKERY.*
HELLO, MADAM WEB? THIS IS--
YOU NEED NOT SPEAK YOUR NAME.
OF COURSE NOT
MADAM WEB
*ISSUE #210--WHEREIN SPIDEY FIRST MET THE PHYSICALLY DISABLED, BUT PSYCHICALLY ADVANCED, MADAM WEB. --AL.

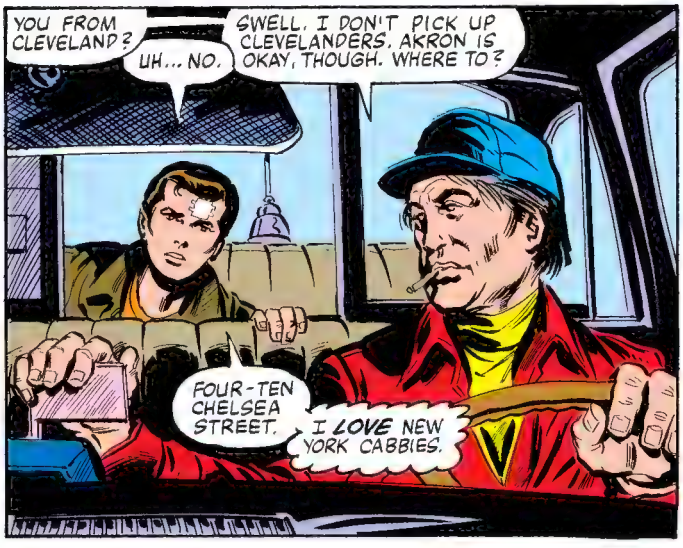

AS TO THE REASON YOU HAVE TELEPHONED: THE PSYCHIC VECTORS ARE NOT IN PROPER ALIGNMENT FOR ME TO PEER INTO THE FUTURE.
I CAN NOT SAY WHO WILL SHOOT NOR WHO WILL BE SHOT. NOR IS THE LOCATION OF THE ASSASSINATION CLEAR TO ME.

HOWEVER, I SHALL CONTINUE TO EXERCISE MY POWERS. IF I LEARN THE INFORMATION YOU SEEK, I SHALL PASS IT ON TO YOU.
FAREWELL.

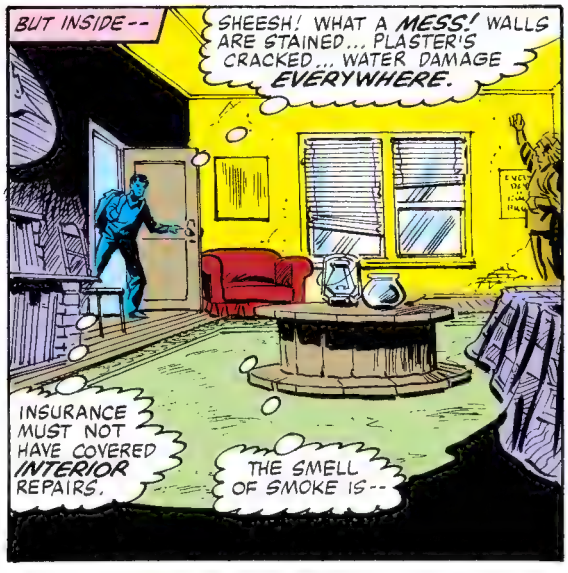
SHE SURE DOESN'T ASK FOR MUCH EXPLANATION--AND HER SMALL TALK BATS A FAT ZERO.
PITY SHE COULDN'T HAVE BEEN MORE HELPFUL--


--'CAUSE WITHOUT A CLUE, THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NOTHING I CAN DO ABOUT WHAT I OVERHEARD.
NO SENSE IN CALLING THE COPS. THEY'D PROBABLY THINK I'M NUTS--

--AND EVEN IF THEY DIDN'T, THEY'D BE AS HELPLESS AS I AM.
VOTE WICKER
I'D BETTER JUST DRAG MY WEARY BOD HOME AND FORGET THE WHOLE MATTER
TAXI!

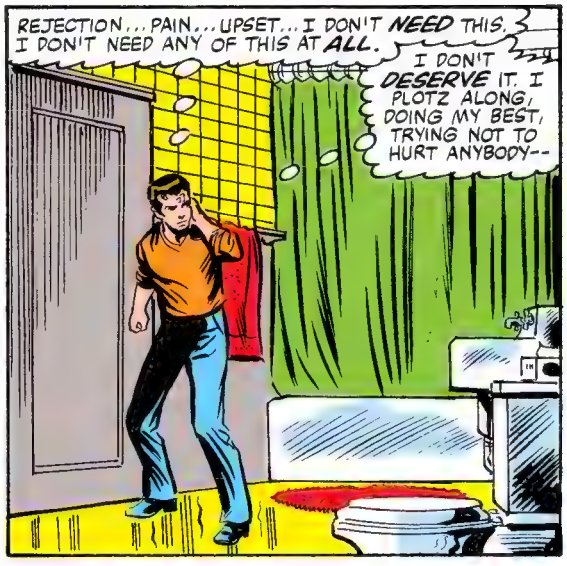

YOU FROM CLEVELAND?
UH... NO.
SWELL. I DON'T PICK UP CLEVELANDERS. AKRON IS OKAY, THOUGH. WHERE TO?
FOUR-TEN CHELSEA STREET.
I LOVE NEW YORK CABBIES.

A TWO-DOLLAR RIDE LATER...
WHOEVER FIXED THE FIRE DAMAGE TO MY APARTMENT BUILDING SEEMS TO HAVE DONE A GOOD JOB. IT LOOKS OKAY... AT LEAST FROM THE OUTSIDE--

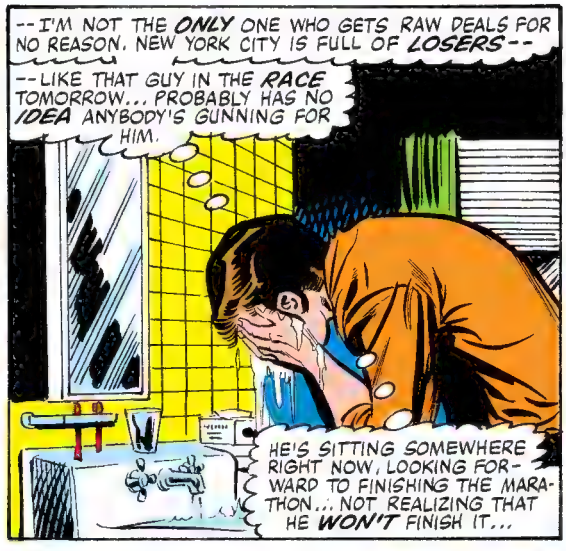

BUT INSIDE--
SHEESH! WHAT A MESS! WALLS ARE STAINED... PLASTER'S CRACKED... WATER DAMAGE EVERYWHERE.
INSURANCE MUST NOT HAVE COVERED INTERIOR REPAIRS.
THE SMELL OF SMOKE IS--

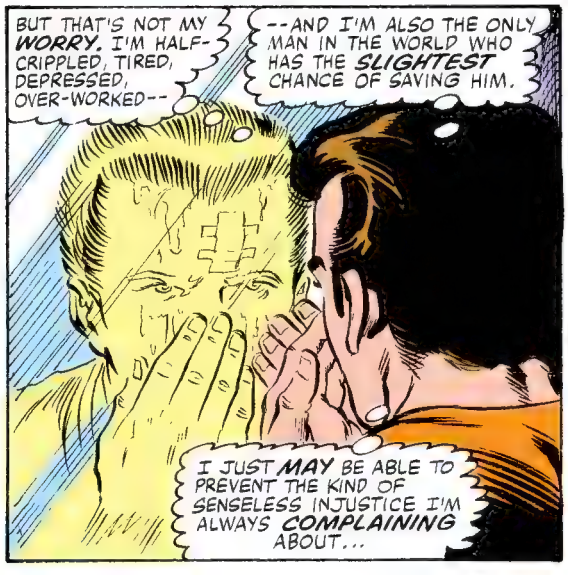
--AWFUL. MY CLOTHES REEK. I'LL HAVE TO BUY AN ENTIRE NEW WARDROBE--OR GET USED TO PEOPLE WALKING AWAY FROM ME HOLDING THEIR NOSES.
AND MY SOCIAL LIFE IS BAD ENOUGH ALREADY.
AT LEAST THINGS CAN'T GET WORSE.

O THE FIRE BURNT UP MY FAVORITE CACTUS DIDN'T EVEN NEED NO PRACTICE
MY SINGING NEIGHBOR... OR TO BE EXACT, MY SCREECHING NEIGHBOR. HIS SO-CALLED MUSIC WOULD CURDLE MILK.
EVERY DAY N EVERY WAY U KEEP N GETTING TTER ND TER

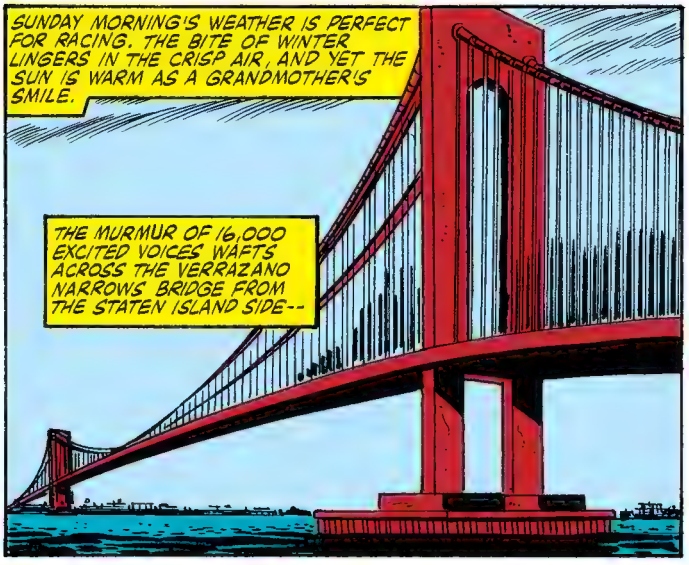

REJECTION... PAIN... UPSET... I DON'T NEED THIS. I DON'T NEED ANY OF THIS AT ALL.
I DON'T DESERVE IT. I PLOTZ ALONG, DOING MY BEST, TRYING NOT TO HURT ANYBODY--

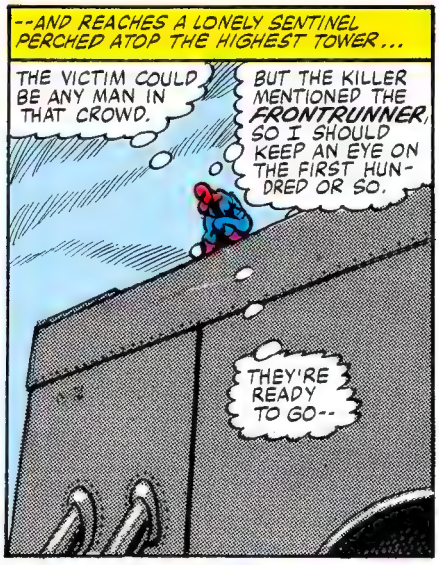
--AND LIFE SEEMS TO PICK ON ME. RANDOM NASTIES COME FROM NOWHERE TO RAIN ON MY PARADE.
I SHOULDN'T WRINKLE MY CHEEKS WITH TEARS OF SELF-PITY, THOUGH--

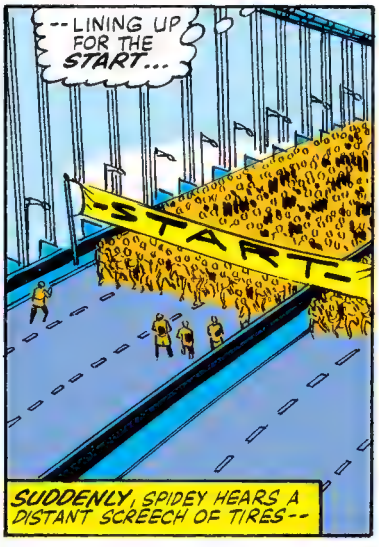

--I'M NOT THE ONLY ONE WHO GETS RAW DEALS FOR NO REASON. NEW YORK CITY IS FULL OF LOSERS--
--LIKE THAT GUY IN THE RACE TOMORROW... PROBABLY HAS NO IDEA ANYBODY'S GUNNING FOR HIM.
HE'S SITTING SOMEWHERE RIGHT NOW, LOOKING FORWARD TO FINISHING THE MARATHON... NOT REALIZING THAT HE WON'T FINISH IT...

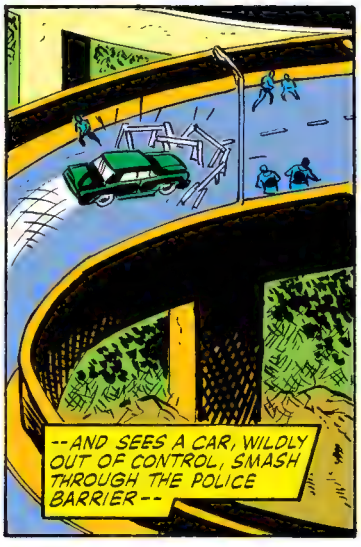

BUT THAT'S NOT MY WORRY. I'M HALF-CRIPPLED, TIRED, DEPRESSED, OVER-WORKED--
--AND I'M ALSO THE ONLY MAN IN THE WORLD WHO HAS THE SLIGHTEST CHANCE OF SAVING HIM.
I JUST MAY BE ABLE TO PREVENT THE KIND OF SENSELESS INJUSTICE I'M ALWAYS COMPLAINING ABOUT...

AT LEAST, I GOTTA TRY, IF I EVER WANT TO LOOK IN THIS MIRROR AGAIN WITHOUT CRINGING.
YEAH... I GOTTA TRY.

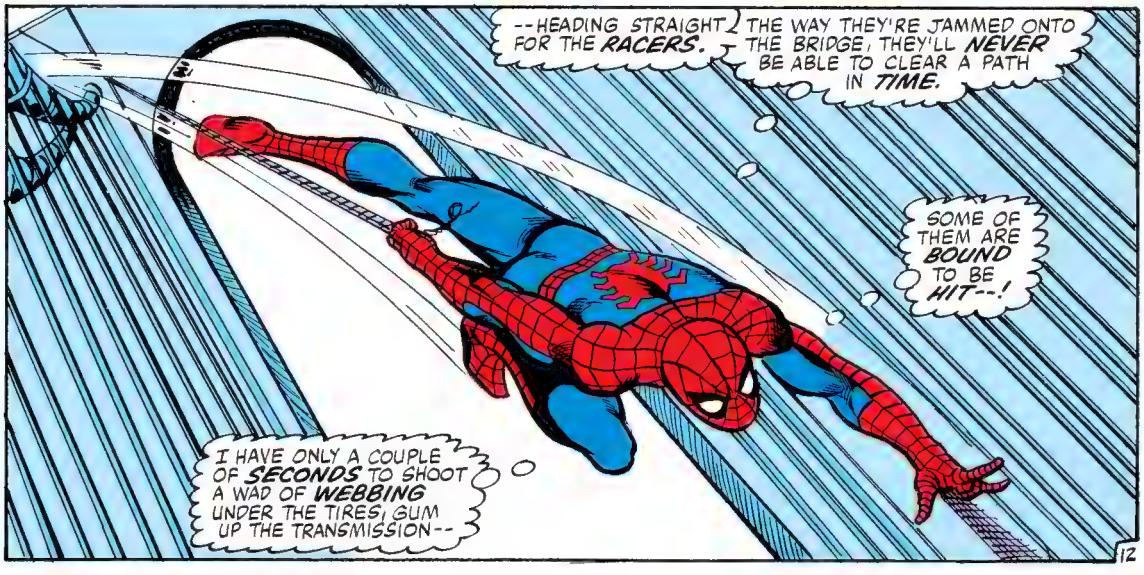

SUNDAY MORNING'S WEATHER IS PERFECT FOR RACING. THE BITE OF WINTER LINGERS IN THE CRISP AIR, AND YET THE SUN IS WARM AS A GRANDMOTHER'S SMILE.
THE MURMUR OF 16,000 EXCITED VOICES WAFTS ACROSS THE VERRAZANO NARROWS BRIDGE FROM THE STATEN ISLAND SIDE--

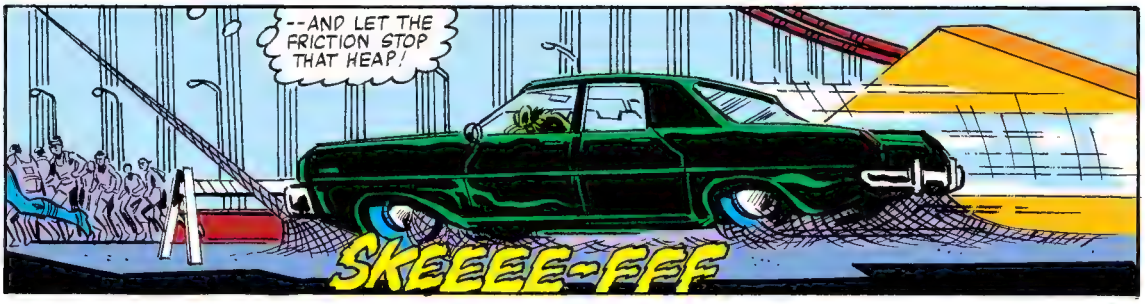

--AND REACHES A LONELY SENTINEL PERCHED ATOP THE HIGHEST TOWER...
THE VICTIM COULD BE ANY MAN IN THAT CROWD.
BUT THE KILLER MENTIONED THE FRONTRUNNER, SO I SHOULD KEEP AN EYE ON THE FIRST HUNDRED OR SO.
THEY'RE READY TO GO--


--LINING UP FOR THE START...
START
SUDDENLY, SPIDEY HEARS A DISTANT SCREECH OF TIRES--


--AND SEES A CAR, WILDLY OUT OF CONTROL, SMASH THROUGH THE POLICE BARRIER--

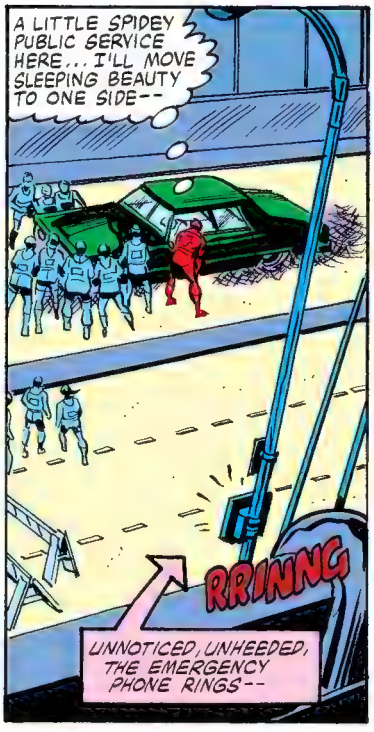
THAT MANIAC IS ON THE MAIN ROADWAY, DOING AT LEAST NINETY--


--HEADING STRAIGHT FOR THE RACERS.
THE WAY THEY'RE JAMMED ONTO THE BRIDGE, THEY'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO CLEAR A PATH IN TIME.
SOME OF THEM ARE BOUND TO BE HIT--!
I HAVE ONLY A COUPLE OF SECONDS TO SHOOT A WAD OF WEBBING UNDER THE TIRES, GUM UP THE TRANSMISSION--


--AND LET THE FRICTION STOP THAT HEAP!
SKEEEE-FFF

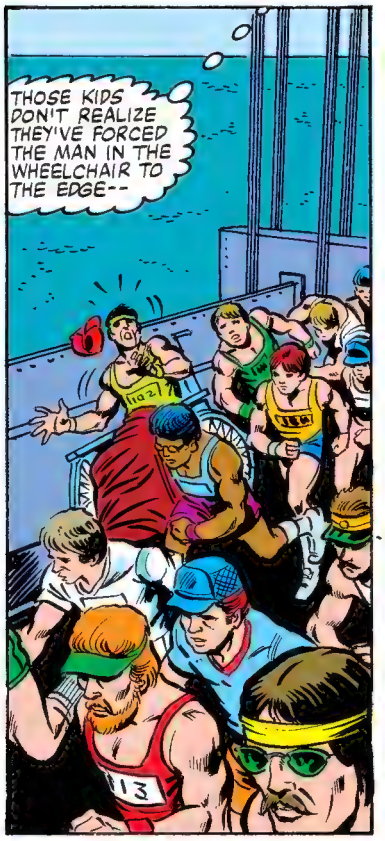
MAYBE THE DRIVER ISN'T A NUT CASE. HE MAY BE A KILLER TRYING TO FAKE AN ACCIDENT--
YEOWTCH!
I FORGOT NOT TO LAND ON MY RIGHT LEG... VERY PAINFUL LAPSE OF MEMORY.

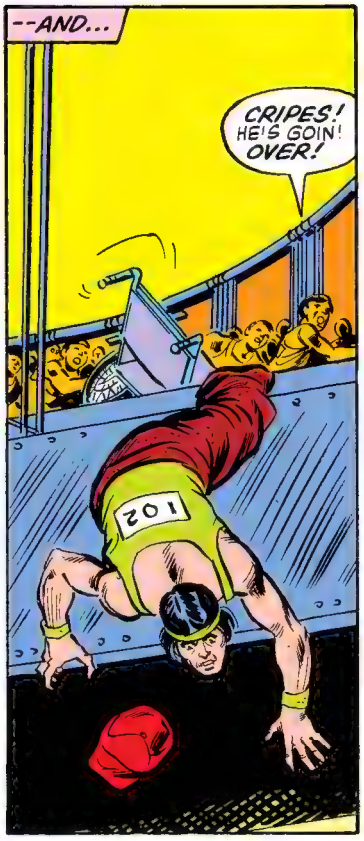
SHEESH! SMELLS LIKE A DISTILLERY IN HERE. THIS GUY ISN'T A CROOK... HE'S A PLAIN, GARDEN-VARIETY DRUNK.
HE'S PASSED OUT. HE'LL WAKE UP WITH A KING-SIZE HEADACHE... WHICH IS LESS THAN HE DESERVES.

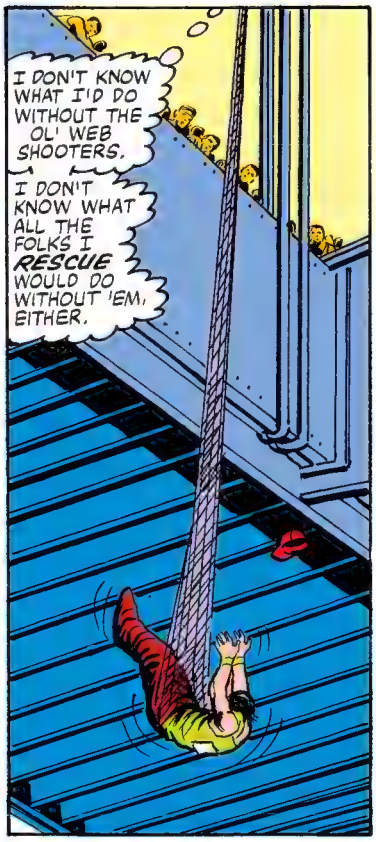

A LITTLE SPIDEY PUBLIC SERVICE HERE... I'LL MOVE SLEEPING BEAUTY TO ONE SIDE--
RRINNG
UNNOTICED, UNHEEDED, THE EMERGENCY PHONE RINGS--

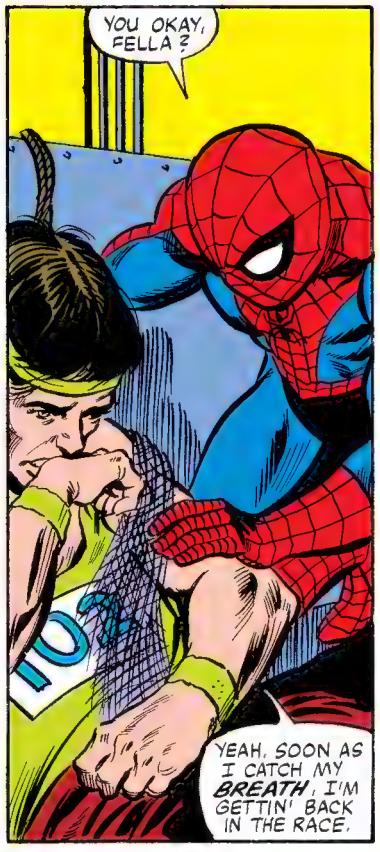
"--JUST AS THE RACE BEGINS!
A SHOT... AND 32,000 SHOES BEGIN SLAPPING THE ASPHALT. AS ONE, THE ATHLETES SURGE FORWARD--
-START-

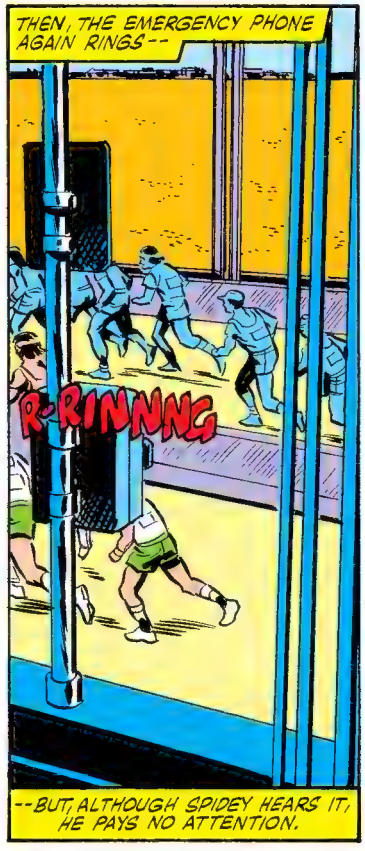
--PACED ON THE CABLE ABOVE BY A NON-ENTRANT...
I CAN'T HOP LIKE THIS FOR LONG. I HOPE WE REACH SOMEWHERE WHERE I CAN DO SOME WEB-SWINGING.
UH-OH... MORE TROUBLE BELOW.

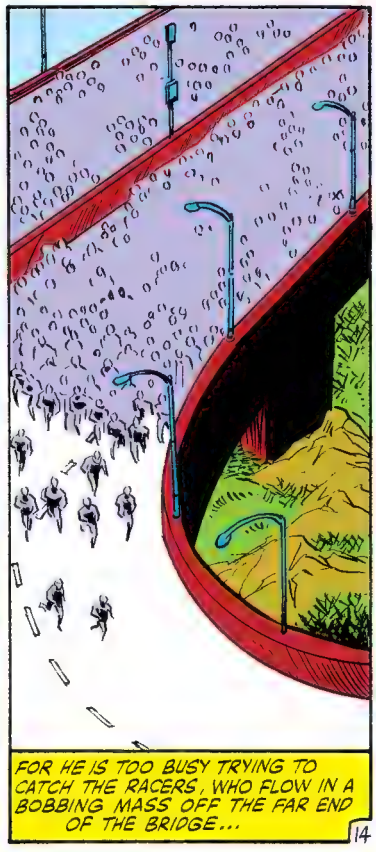

THOSE KIDS DON'T REALIZE THEY'VE FORCED THE MAN IN THE WHEELCHAIR TO THE EDGE--


--AND...
CRIPES! HE'S GOIN' OVER!
102


I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'D DO WITHOUT THE OL' WEB SHOOTERS.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT ALL THE FOLKS I RESCUE WOULD DO WITHOUT 'EM, EITHER.


YOU OKAY, FELLA?
YEAH. SOON AS I CATCH MY BREATH, I'M GETTIN' BACK IN THE RACE.

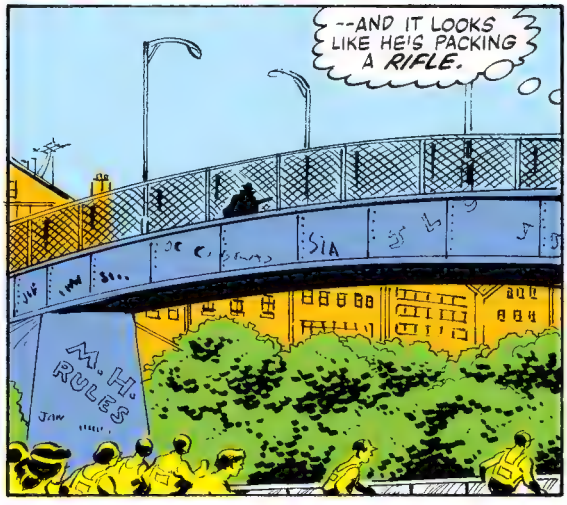

THEN, THE EMERGENCY PHONE AGAIN RINGS--
R-RINNNG
--BUT, ALTHOUGH SPIDEY HEARS IT, HE PAYS NO ATTENTION.


FOR HE IS TOO BUSY TRYING TO CATCH THE RACERS, WHO FLOW IN A BOBBING MASS OFF THE FAR END OF THE BRIDGE...

...AND SCATTER ONTO THE STREETS OF BROOKLYN--
HOW FAR WE GONE?
TWO MILES.
I'M GONNA DIE.

I MIGHT BE WASTING MY TIME AND ENERGY. THOSE MEN AT THE HOSPITAL COULD'VE BEEN KIDDING AROUND--

UH OH! THEY WEREN'T!
SOMEBODY'S WAITING ON THE OVERPASS--


--AND IT LOOKS LIKE HE'S PACKING A RIFLE.
M.H. RULES

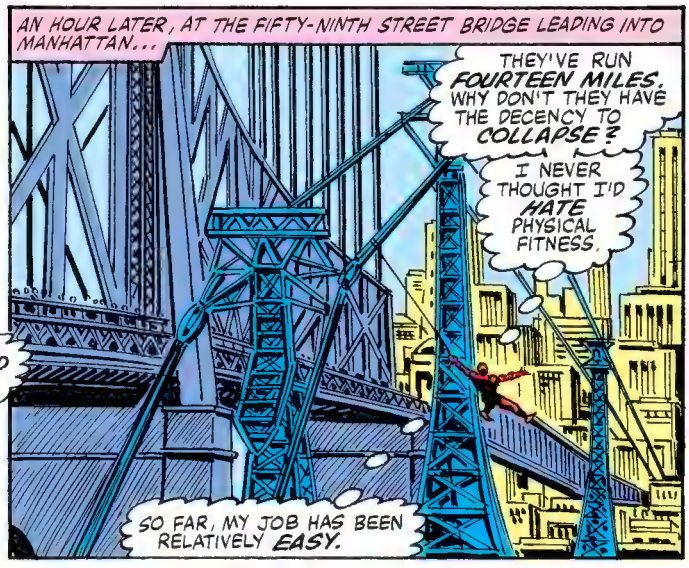
SORRY TO RUIN YOUR SUNDAY CHUCKLES, BUT YOU WON'T BE COLLECTING YOUR BLOOD MONEY.
IN FACT, YOU WON'T BE COLLECTING ANYTHING--

--EXCEPT A BIG, FAT BRUISE.
UNNGH!

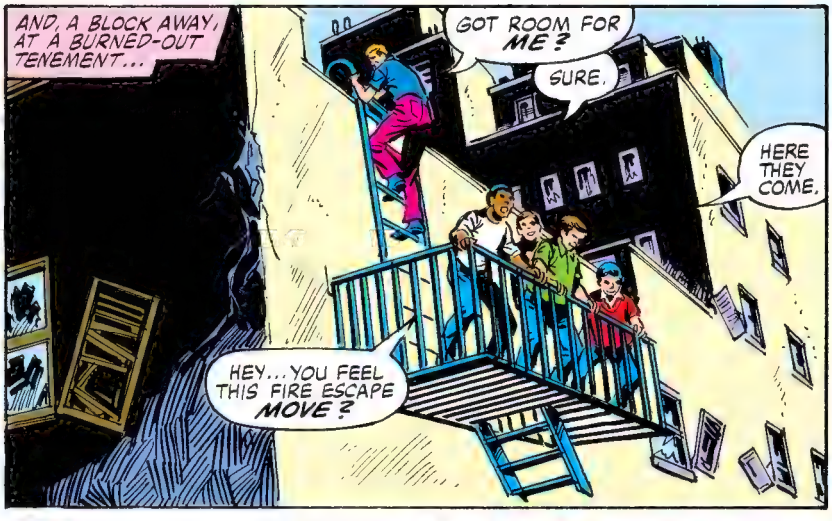
I'M TAKING YOU AND YOUR GUN TO--
GUN? WHADDAYA TALKING ABOUT WITH THAT GUN STUFF?

YOU EVER SEE ANYBODY SHOOT A BANJO?

I'M REPORTING YOU TO THE POLICE, THE F.B.I.--!
DON'T FORGET THE MUSICIANS UNION.
I'M TOO EMBARRASSED TO APOLOGIZE.

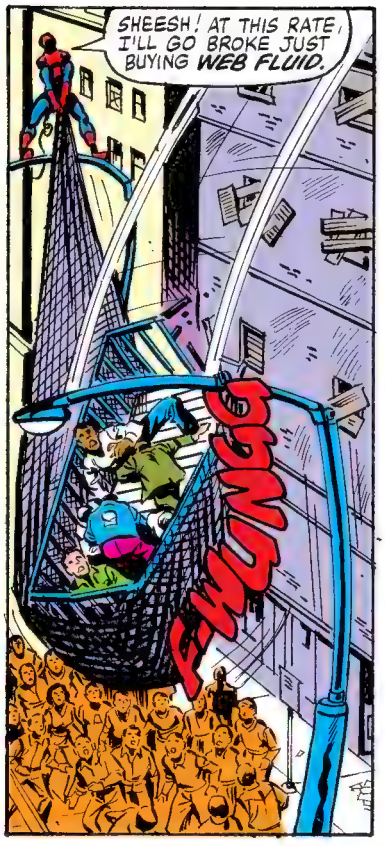

AN HOUR LATER, AT THE FIFTY-NINTH STREET BRIDGE LEADING INTO MANHATTAN...
THEY'VE RUN FOURTEEN MILES. WHY DON'T THEY HAVE THE DECENCY TO COLLAPSE?
I NEVER THOUGHT I'D HATE PHYSICAL FITNESS.
SO FAR, MY JOB HAS BEEN RELATIVELY EASY.

NOW... THE HARD PART. THE COURSE GOES PAST A HUNDRED SKY-SCRAPERS AND APARTMENT BUILDINGS--
--WITH A MILLION WINDOWS AND ROOFTOPS, I CAN'T LOOK IN EVERY DIRECTION AT ONCE.
FULEY


AND, A BLOCK AWAY, AT A BURNED-OUT TENEMENT...
GOT ROOM FOR ME?
SURE.
HERE THEY COME.
HEY... YOU FEEL THIS FIRE ESCAPE MOVE?

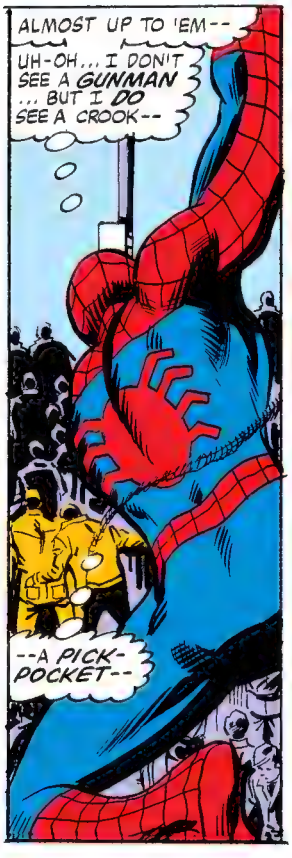
IT'S PULLIN' LOOSE FROM THE WALL--

HELLP


SHEESH! AT THIS RATE, I'LL GO BROKE JUST BUYING WEB FLUID.
F-WUNGG

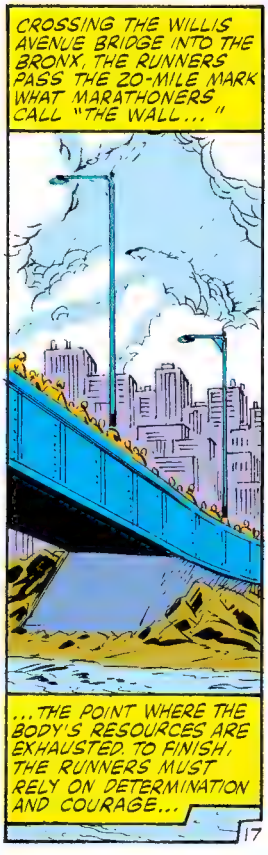
THIS ROUTE DOWN IS SLOWER, FELLAS -- BUT IT WON'T HURT AS MUCH WHEN YOU GET THERE.
AIN'T THAT SPIDER-MAN?
YEH... SHOWIN' OFF, AS USUAL.

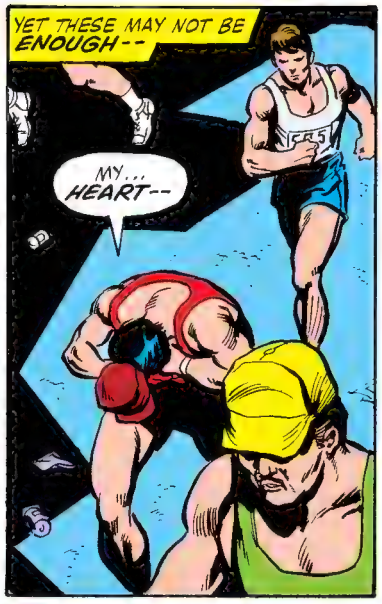
WHILE I WAS TENDING TO THOSE KIDS, THE RACERS GAINED THREE BLOCKS.
ONE OF THEM COULD BE FRAMED IN A GUNSIGHT RIGHT NOW.
WICKER
R-RINNGG
AND A RINGING PHONE GOES UNHEARD...

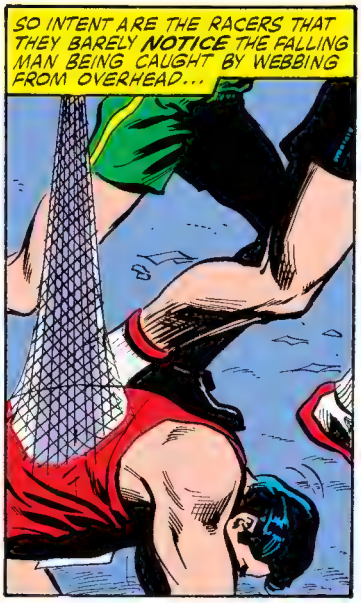

ALMOST UP TO 'EM --
UH-OH... I DON'T SEE A GUNMAN ... BUT I DO SEE A CROOK --
--A PICK-POCKET--

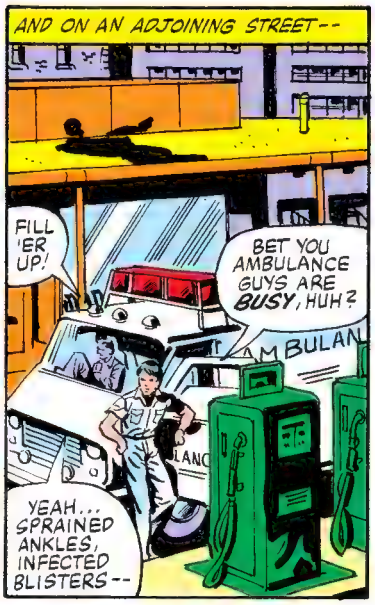
-- WORKING THE SPECTATORS.
I CAN'T STOP TO NAIL HIM, BUT I CAN PUT A CRIMP IN HIS STYLE.
FWIP
LOOK ON THE BRIGHT SIDE, ACE --

-- I'VE CURED YOU OF NAIL BITING.
HUH?

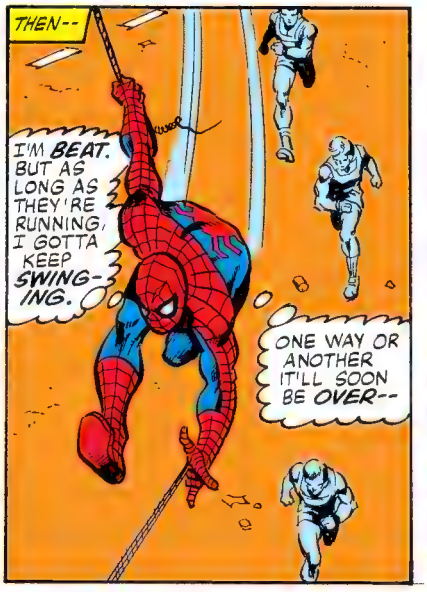

CROSSING THE WILLIS AVENUE BRIDGE INTO THE BRONX, THE RUNNERS PASS THE 20-MILE MARK WHAT MARATHONERS CALL "THE WALL..."
...THE POINT WHERE THE BODY'S RESOURCES ARE EXHAUSTED. TO FINISH, THE RUNNERS MUST RELY ON DETERMINATION AND COURAGE...

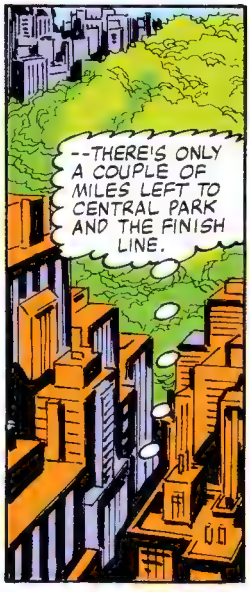

YET THESE MAY NOT BE ENOUGH--
MY... HEART--

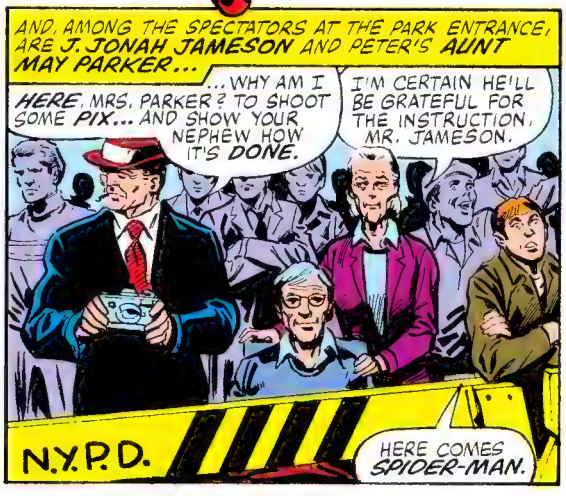

SO INTENT ARE THE RACERS THAT THEY BARELY NOTICE THE FALLING MAN BEING CAUGHT BY WEBBING FROM OVERHEAD...

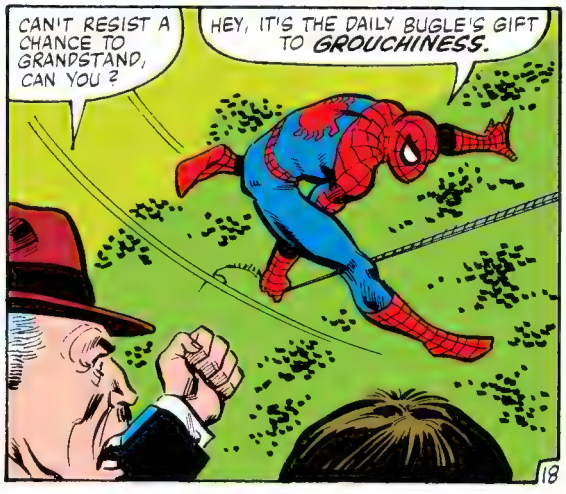

AND ON AN ADJOINING STREET--
FILL 'ER UP!
BET YOU AMBULANCE GUYS ARE BUSY, HUH?
YEAH... SPRAINED ANKLES, INFECTED BLISTERS--

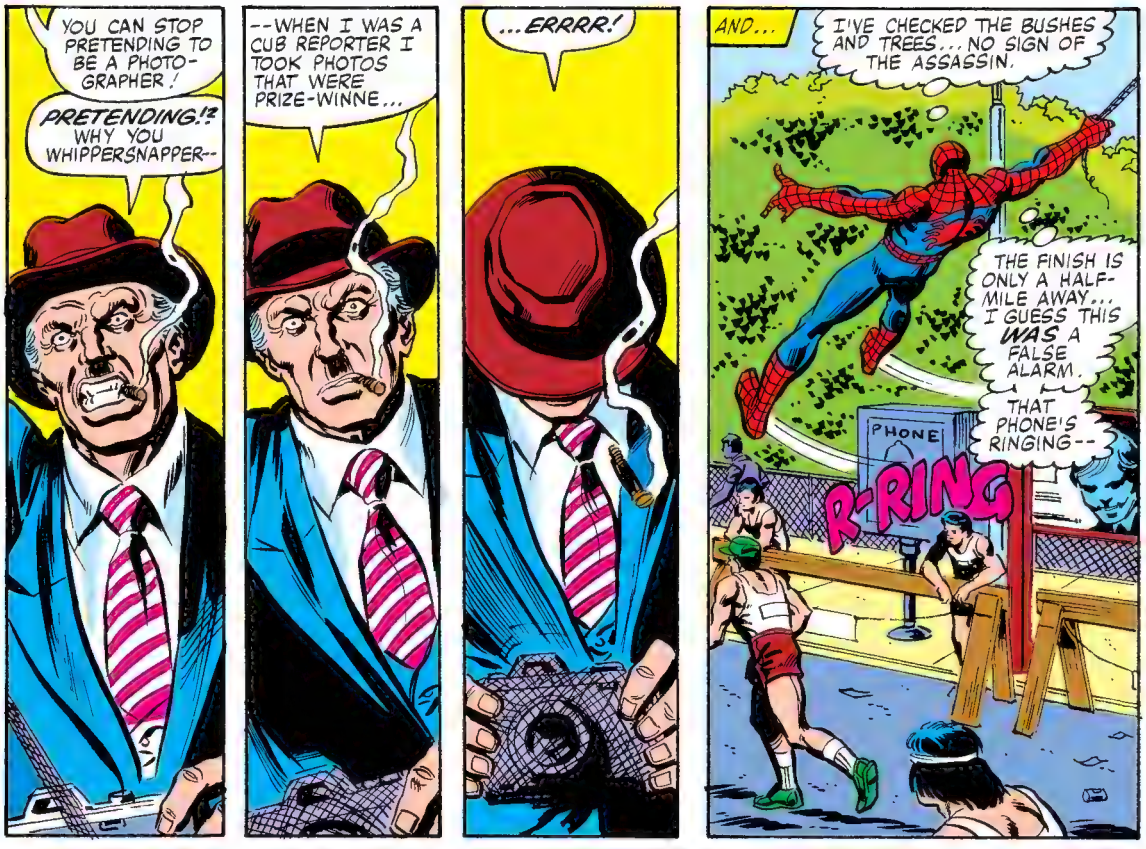
--HEART ATTACKS!
BETTER HURRY. HE'S ALIVE, BUT HE'S IN BAD SHAPE.

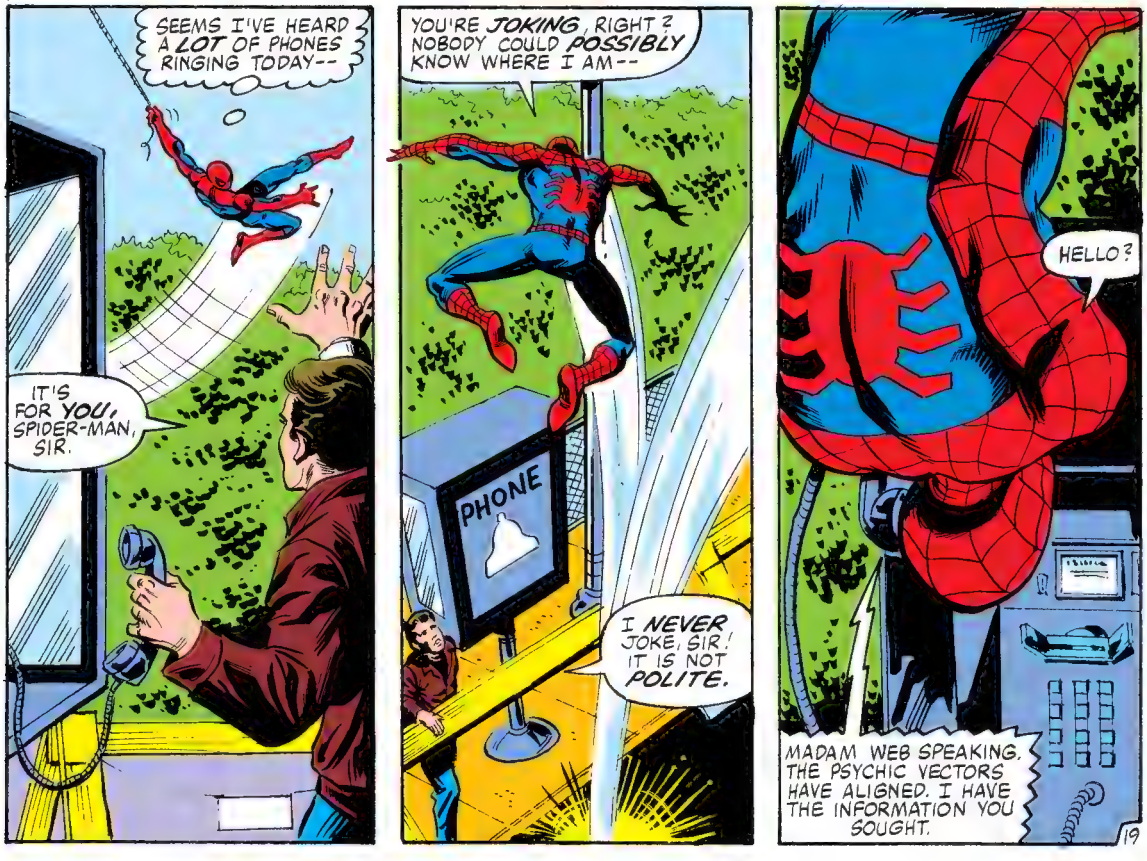

THEN--
I'M BEAT. BUT AS LONG AS THEY'RE RUNNING, I GOTTA KEEP SWINGING.
ONE WAY OR ANOTHER IT'LL SOON BE OVER--

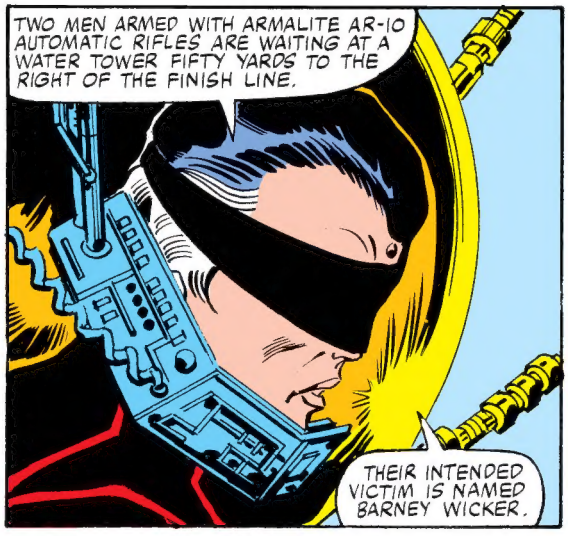

--THERE'S ONLY A COUPLE OF MILES LEFT TO CENTRAL PARK AND THE FINISH LINE.

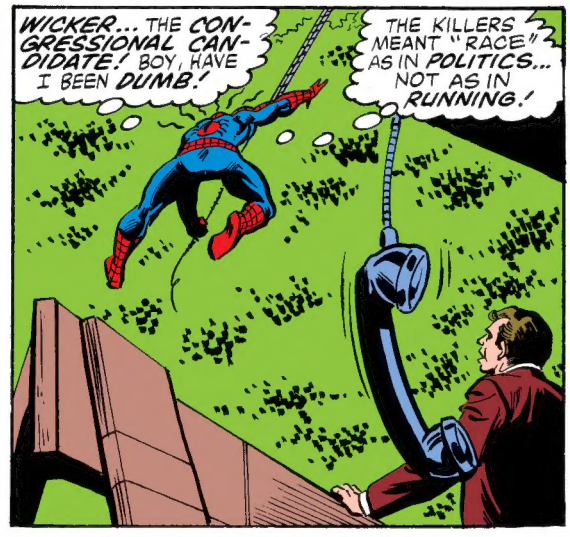

AND, AMONG THE SPECTATORS AT THE PARK ENTRANCE, ARE J. JONAH JAMESON AND PETER'S AUNT MAY PARKER...
...WHY AM I HERE, MRS. PARKER? TO SHOOT SOME PIX... AND SHOW YOUR NEPHEW HOW IT'S DONE.
I'M CERTAIN HE'LL BE GRATEFUL FOR THE INSTRUCTION, MR. JAMESON.
N.Y.P.D.
HERE COMES SPIDER-MAN.


CAN'T RESIST A CHANCE TO GRANDSTAND, CAN YOU?
HEY, IT'S THE DAILY BUGLE'S GIFT TO GROUCHINESS.

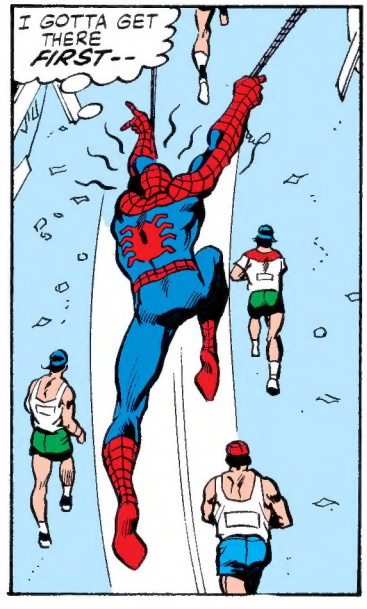

YOU CAN STOP PRETENDING TO BE A PHOTOGRAPHER!
PRETENDING!? WHY YOU WHIPPERSNAPPER--
--WHEN I WAS A CUB REPORTER I TOOK PHOTOS THAT WERE PRIZE-WINNE...
...ERRRR!
AND...
I'VE CHECKED THE BUSHES AND TREES... NO SIGN OF THE ASSASSIN.
THE FINISH IS ONLY A HALF-MILE AWAY... I GUESS THIS WAS A FALSE ALARM.
THAT PHONE'S RINGING--
PHONE
R-RING

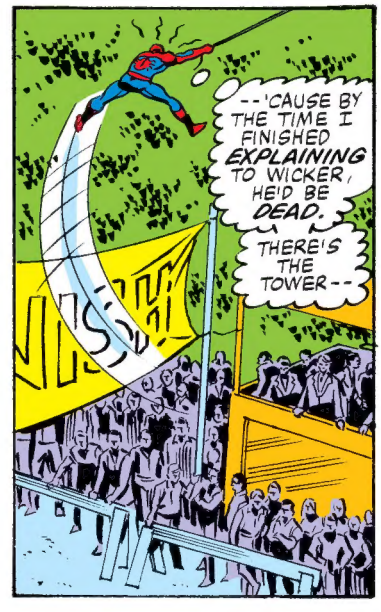

SEEMS I'VE HEARD A LOT OF PHONES RINGING TODAY--
IT'S FOR YOU, SPIDER-MAN, SIR.
YOU'RE JOKING, RIGHT? NOBODY COULD POSSIBLY KNOW WHERE I AM--
PHONE
I NEVER JOKE, SIR! IT IS NOT POLITE.
HELLO?
MADAM WEB SPEAKING. THE PSYCHIC VECTORS HAVE ALIGNED. I HAVE THE INFORMATION YOU SOUGHT.

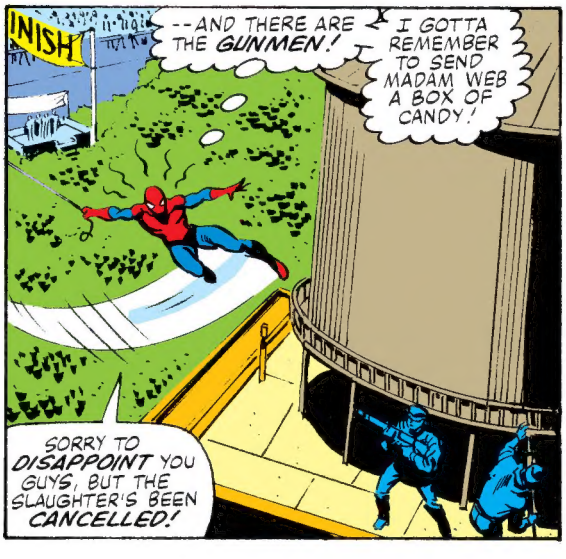

TWO MEN ARMED WITH ARMALITE AR-10 AUTOMATIC RIFLES ARE WAITING AT A WATER TOWER FIFTY YARDS TO THE RIGHT OF THE FINISH LINE.
THEIR INTENDED VICTIM IS NAMED BARNEY WICKER.


WICKER... THE CONGRESSIONAL CANDIDATE! BOY, HAVE I BEEN DUMB!
THE KILLERS MEANT "RACE" AS IN POLITICS... NOT AS IN RUNNING!

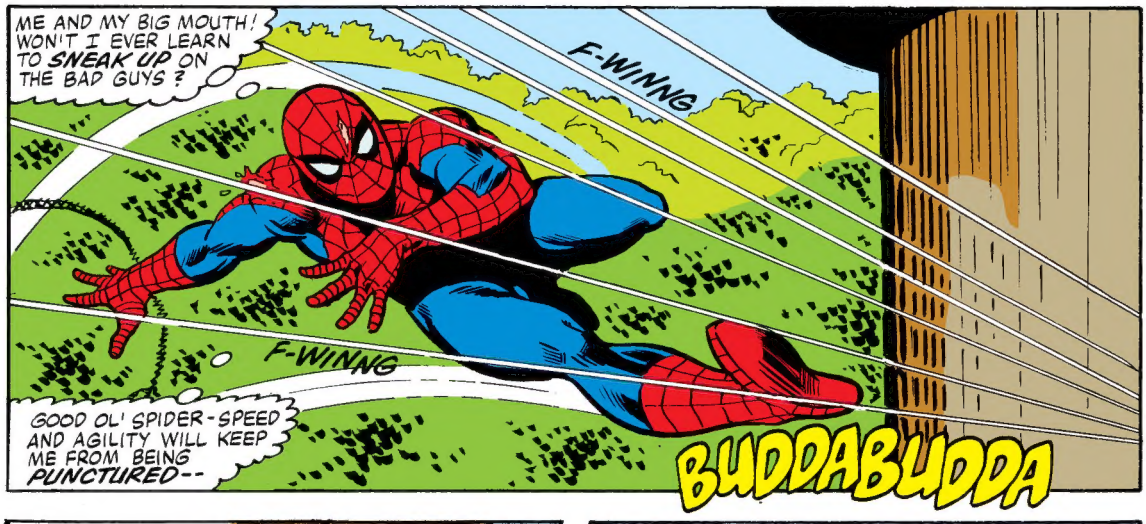
WICKER'S SCHEDULED TO GREET THE WINNER... AND WHEN HE DOES THEY'LL HAVE A CLEAR SHOT AT HIM.

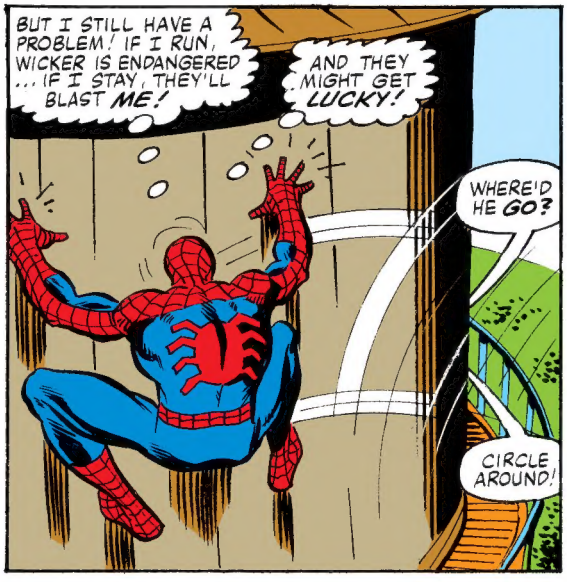

I GOTTA GET THERE FIRST--

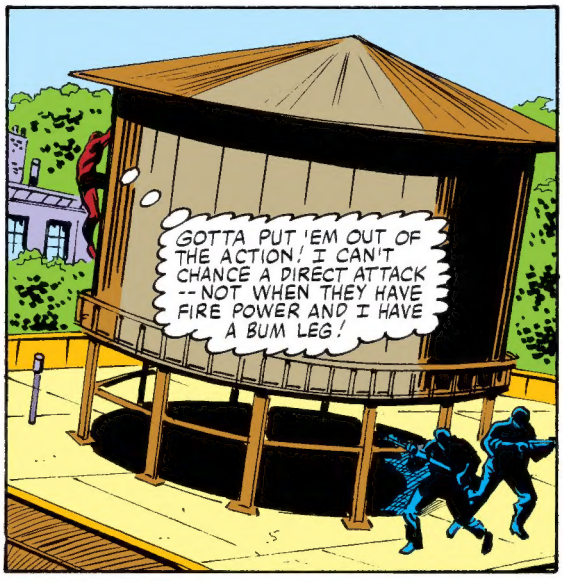

--'CAUSE BY THE TIME I FINISHED EXPLAINING TO WICKER, HE'D BE DEAD.
THERE'S THE TOWER--

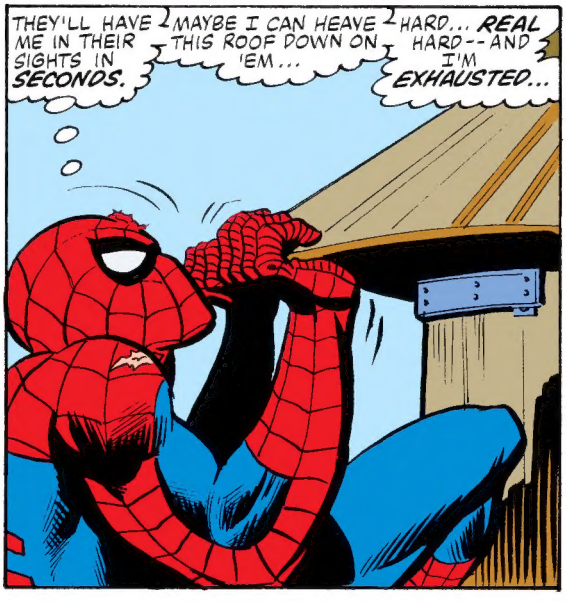

INISH
--AND THERE ARE THE GUNMEN!
I GOTTA REMEMBER TO SEND MADAM WEB A BOX OF CANDY!
SORRY TO DISAPPOINT YOU GUYS, BUT THE SLAUGHTER'S BEEN CANCELLED!

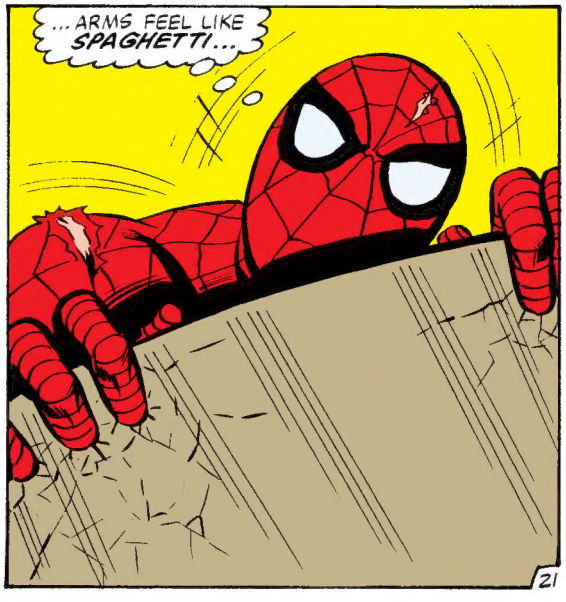
SPIDER-MAN! WE GONNA KILL 'IM?
WE GOT NO CHOICE!

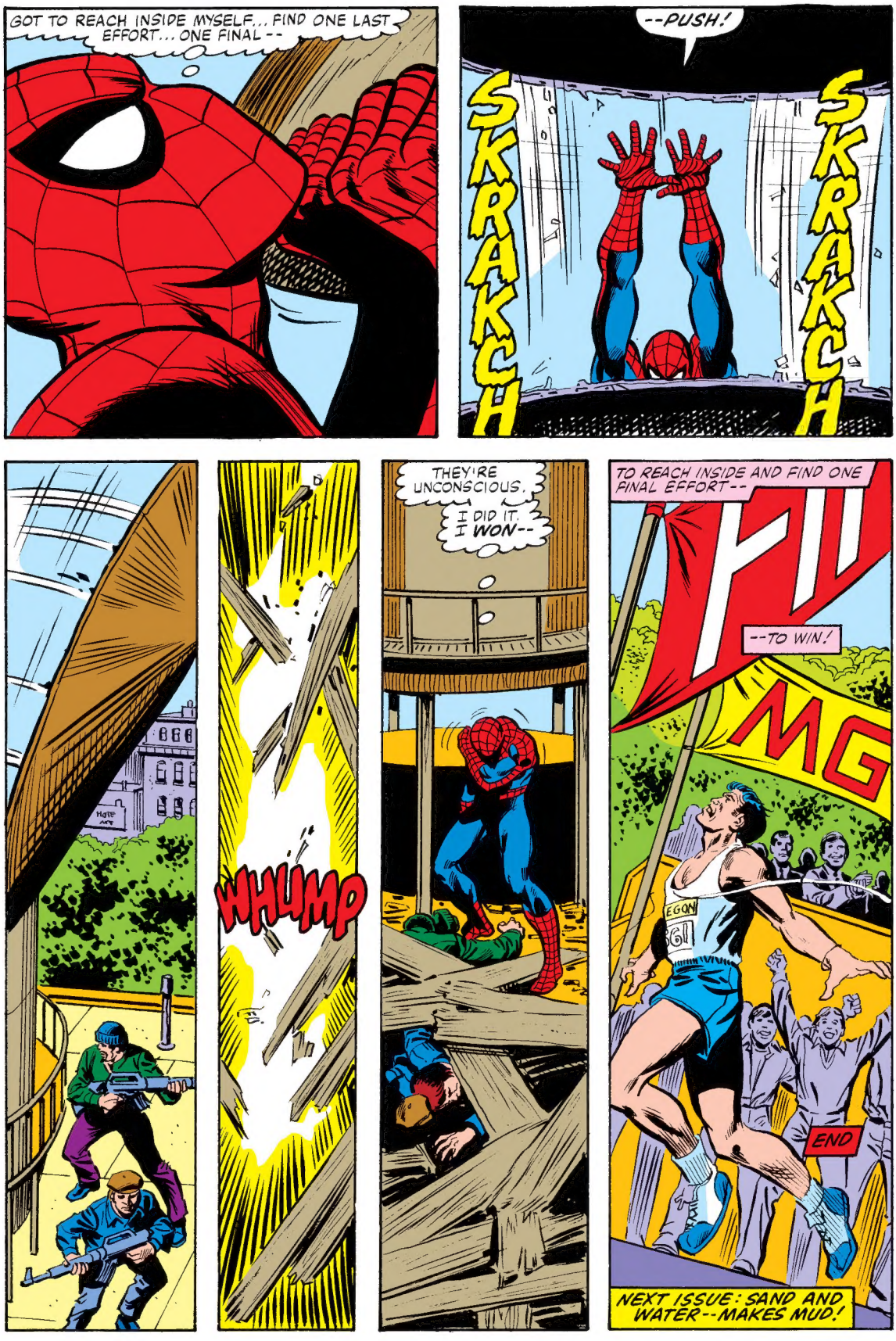

ME AND MY BIG MOUTH! WON'T I EVER LEARN TO SNEAK UP ON THE BAD GUYS?
F-WINNG
F-WINNG
GOOD OL' SPIDER-SPEED AND AGILITY WILL KEEP ME FROM BEING PUNCTURED--
BUDDABUDDA


BUT I STILL HAVE A PROBLEM! IF I RUN, WICKER IS ENDANGERED ... IF I STAY, THEY'LL BLAST ME!
AND THEY MIGHT GET LUCKY!
WHERE'D HE GO?
CIRCLE AROUND!


GOTTA PUT 'EM OUT OF THE ACTION! I CAN'T CHANCE A DIRECT ATTACK -- NOT WHEN THEY HAVE FIRE POWER AND I HAVE A BUM LEG!


THEY'LL HAVE ME IN THEIR SIGHTS IN SECONDS.
MAYBE I CAN HEAVE THIS ROOF DOWN ON 'EM ...
HARD... REAL HARD -- AND I'M EXHAUSTED...


... ARMS FEEL LIKE SPAGHETTI...


GOT TO REACH INSIDE MYSELF... FIND ONE LAST EFFORT... ONE FINAL--
--PUSH!
SKRAKCH
SKRAKCH
WHUMP
THEY'RE UNCONSCIOUS.
I DID IT. I WON--
TO REACH INSIDE AND FIND ONE FINAL EFFORT--
--TO WIN!
END
NEXT ISSUE: SAND AND WATER--MAKES MUD!

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Shadowcat